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Eksportnye nefte—i gazoprovody na postsovetском prostranstve. Analiz truboprovodnoi politiki v svete teorii mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii

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A question this work raises is who the target audience for it actually is. Spanning two hardback volumes in total to cover the whole region, it is hardly practical as a textbook for students on the foreign policy of post-Soviet Eurasia, although at times some chapters do come across as introductions to topics for the uninitiated. However, for specialists more familiar with the region, there is little that is really new here. The background chapters in parts one and two are at times rather shallow and disappointing. There are some embarrassing basic mistakes, such as placing the re-election of Putin as president in 2014 instead of 2012 (p. 111). The three chapters on Ukraine do have some more interesting insights, but not enough for most people to justify buying the whole book. This volume is probably not an essential addition to any collection on foreign policy or the confrontation in Ukraine.

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Inna Chuvychkina (ed.), *Eksportnye nefte—i gazoprovody na postsovetском prostranstve. Analiz truboprovodnoi politiki v svete teorii mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii*. Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2015, xv + 199pp., €24.90 p/b.

THIS EDITED VOLUME, ON EXPORT-ORIENTED OIL AND GAS PIPELINES in the post-Soviet space, features seven articles employing a variety of approaches and case studies. The book is divided into three sections on actors' formation of energy and pipeline politics, problems of cooperation, and the conflict potential of pipeline politics, respectively. A timely publication, especially in the wake of renewed conflicts between Russia and the European Union as a result of the Ukraine crisis, the authors bring to the reader's attention the role of hydrocarbons in international relations. This is shown in a variety of aspects from the formulation of policy and exploitation of reserves, to interactions among suppliers, consumers and transit countries of the post-Soviet space, as well as the competition which arises between and amongst both regional and major world powers.

In the opening article of the section on actors' formation of energy politics, Niels Smeets and Irina Petrova explore the various identities a country has towards its different partners in the sphere of energy resources. Using discourse analysis in the framework of social constructivism as a way of explaining the polarisation of energy relations between Russia and the European Union, they examine the transcripts of EU–Russia summit press conferences from 2009 to 2014 to see which identities leaders of the respective sides have adopted. They find that while both sides share common interests, Russia is keener on its role of supplier while the EU has taken on the role of consumer in its effort to establish a stable and reliable supply of oil and gas.

In the next article, Julia Kusznir investigates the competition for energy resources and influence in the Caspian Sea region. After situating the research in the framework of various theories of geopolitics, the author examines the competing projects of the United States, Russia, China and the European Union in the Caspian. These include the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline and the New Silk Road Initiative, the construction of pipelines and initiatives under the so-called Energy Club, pipeline projects between China and Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, and the Southern Gas Corridor. She finds that theories of geopolitics are too state-centric and concentrated on geography and do not pay sufficient attention to transnational actors such as international energy companies and economic organisations.

In the final article, Irina Kustova investigates European integration and the EU's energy policy using the Southern Gas Corridor and the Third Energy Package using two theories of integration—supranational governance and liberal inter-governmentalism. She first finds that the gradual transfer to subnational

organs of the EU is changing how pipelines are used within both the EU and neighbouring countries using EU legislation. Additionally she notes that success is reliant on both the layout of the geopolitical situation in the Caspian region as well as agreement within the EU itself. Finally, she states that the weakness of EU foreign policy can to some extent be substituted with the spreading of EU internal norms to neighbouring countries.

Leading off the second section on problems of cooperation, Inna Chuvychkina investigates interactions between the EU and Russia in the sphere of energy, using the concept of interdependency within the theory of neoliberal institutionalism. She concludes that while the EU is dependent on Russian energy resources and Russia is dependent on the EU as an energy market for its own goods, their relationship 'takes on a confrontational character where the logic of a zero-sum game prevails' (p. 102). Neoliberal institutionalism cannot explain why, for example, legal ties are based on bilateral agreements between Russia and EU member countries instead of the formation of institutions (p. 103) for improving relations between the two sides. In this case, 'norms and rules are not the end, but rather the means for the EU to achieve concrete political and economic goals' (p. 104).

Next, Lusine Badalyan looks at the role of political and economic dependency in the EU's assessment of democracy in the Eastern Partnership countries. Comparing data on democracy ratings from both the EU and Freedom House using qualitative content analysis, she finds that the EU is more likely to give a better democracy assessment to countries with which it has a higher degree of political and economic linkages. Then, employing a regression analysis using data on the structure of foreign trade, she finds that the higher the number of links between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries in a variety of areas of cooperation, the more likely the EU is to give a positive assessment of democracy.

The final section contains two articles on the potential for conflict in pipeline politics, both using incidents between Russia and Ukraine. Katerina Bosko provides a very interesting piece on the battle to privatise Ukraine's gas transport system using securitisation theory. Despite their mutual interdependency and Russia's larger economic strength it was never able to take over Ukraine's gas transport system. This was due to the political opposition in Kiev securitising the question of privatisation, turning it into a threat to national security and damaging the government's image every time it was brought up. She also notes that this is typical of decision making in Ukraine in general and not limited just to the post-Soviet energy sphere. Another aspect of this issue is the fact that 'the rules of the game in hybrid regimes are always changing' (p. 147) and in hybrid regimes 'the possibilities for securitization are much higher than in either democratic or authoritarian regimes' (p. 149) due to their multiple centres of power.

Lastly, Andreas Heinrich investigates the role of communication during the 2006 Russian–Ukrainian gas dispute by looking at the internal structures and dynamics of conflict. He examines conflict as a communication process, from which conflict itself arises, and uses discourse analysis to define its various stages. Employing process tracing, he successfully demonstrates that the conflict between Russia and Ukraine went through all four necessary stages and that this method is able to produce a greater understanding of conflict than traditional theories focusing on external reasons.

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David H. Mould, *Postcards from Stanland. Journeys in Central Asia*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2016, xiv + 310pp., £16.99/\$24.95 p/b.

THE PECULIARITIES OF LIVING IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT REPUBLICS of the former Soviet south since the late 1990s have evoked considerable journalistic creativity (of often questionable quality)